

# Billings Area Injury Prevention Newsletter

Billings Area Indian Health Service

December 2006

Volume 1, Issue 2

## Rocky Mountain College's Indian Country Environmental Health Project Comes to an End

RMC's Office of American Indian Affairs, with support from Rocky Mountain Technology Foundation (RMTF) and the Indian Health Service Environmental Health Officer, LCDR Gary Carter, designed an environmental health program with the specific needs of tribal professionals and community members in mind. RMC and LCDR Carter presented the program concept to Montana's Tribal Colleges in 2004.

Through this collaboration, RMC offered a one-year certificate program in environmental health consisting of 150-hours of instruction. The certificate project provided a basic understanding of environmental health issues threatening American Indians in Montana. Training focused on environmental health topics unique to American Indians; injury prevention and accidents, air and water quality, solid and hazardous waste management, food borne illness and contamination, vector borne disease, risk assessment and management, and chronic disease.

Guest speakers and teachers from the Indian Health Service included: Gary Carter, LeAnn Johnson, Ken Hull, Jodee Dennison, and George Allen.



Graduates of Rocky Mountain College's Indian Country Environmental Health Project pose for the audience.

[Please see RMC's IEHP story...](#)

## National Standardized Child Passenger Safety Training Program Issues Certificates for Child Passenger Safety Technicians

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Standardized Child Passenger Safety Training Program certified two students this November.

Elliot Tapaha, Traffic Safety Officer for the Fort Peck Law Enforcement, Poplar, MT, and Darcy Merchant, Assistant Area Injury Prevention

Specialist, Billings Area Indian Health Service were each certified as Child Passenger Safety Technicians. The Billings Area I.H.S. sponsored the National Standardized Child Passenger Safety Training (CPS) held in August 29-Sept 1, at the Holiday Inn Grand Montana.

The two newly certified CPS Technicians will utilize their skills by participating and coordinating child passenger car seat clinics in Fort Peck and throughout the Billings Area Indian Health Service. CPS Technicians select appropriate

child restraints and secure children in vehicle restraint systems according to child passenger safety best practice guidelines. They also teach parents and care givers how to properly install and secure child car seats in motor vehicles. For a list of car seat clinics in your area, please call your local I.H.S. or Tribal Environmental Health facility.



(l-r), Elliot Tapaha, Fort Peck Law Enforcement, and Darcy Merchant, Billings Area Indian Health Service are newly certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians.

### Next Scheduled Certification Course:

-April 24th, 2007 at Great Falls, MT. For more information please visit:

<http://www.safekids.org/certification/>

### "INJURIES ARE NOT ACCIDENTS."

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#### Events and Schedules:

##### December 2006

- Dec, 6th- Diabetes Awareness "Lunch and Learn", 12-12:30pm, Billings Area Indian Health Service, 2nd floor conference room.
- Dec, 5th- A Car Seat Clinic is scheduled from 10am-2pm at the Crow/ Northern Cheyenne Hospital Ambulance Bay.
- Dec, 13- A Car Seat Clinic is scheduled from 10am-2pm at the Blackfeet Service Unit, School District 9 Bus Garage.

Area Wide Seat Belt and  
Child Restraint, FY 07, 1st  
Quarter Observational  
Surveys conducted at the  
following locations:

**Blackfeet Service Unit**

**Crow Service Unit**

**Northern Cheyenne  
Service Unit**

**Wind River Service Unit-  
Eastern Shoshone**

**Seat Belt Survey Results:**

Click on link below to view  
results.

[See The Results](#)

**Child Restraint Survey  
Results:**

Click on link below to view  
results.

[See The Results](#)

## Area Wide News and Events

### Billings Area Office

**June-August, 2006-** The Billings Area Indian Health Service, Injury Prevention Program would like to thank Kristina Pounds for her service as a Summer Junior COSTEP. Kristina helped with various Injury Prevention projects throughout the summer. She completed the Injury Prevention Level I training held at the Holiday Inn Grand-Billings, MT this past summer. She currently is attending college at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

**November, 2006-** The Billings Area Indian Health Service held its Injury Prevention Coalition Quarterly Meeting on November 14, 2006. The meeting comprised of over 14 I.H.S., Tribal, and BIA staff.

### Blackfeet Service Unit

**December, 2006-** A Car Seat Clinic is scheduled for December 13, 2006 from 10am-2pm at the Blackfeet Service Unit, School District 9 Bus Garage.

### Crow Service Unit

**November, 2006-** The Crow DUI Task Force held its monthly meeting at the Crow/Northern Cheyenne Indian Health Service Hospital.

**December, 2006-** A car seat clinic sponsored by the Billings Area Indian Health Service, Injury Prevention Program and hosted by the Crow Service Unit is scheduled for Tuesday, December 5th, 2006 from 10am-2pm at the Crow/Northern Cheyenne Hospital in the Emergency Room Ambulance Bay.

### Fort Belknap Service Unit

**FY 2006, Highlights-** Our office along with the volunteer fire department conducted a fire drill at the Ft. Belknap tribal office. This was the first time a fire drill was held at the tribal office. A recommendation was made to purchase fire extinguishers for each floor and wing of the tribal office, also make evacuation plans and fire exit signs.

During the Governors Summit on Emergency Preparedness one of our staff members took a Meth Toolkit and provided information to the Montana Indian Nations Working group.

Our department contracted the services of Ms. Rae Forseth who is a self-defense instructor. Ms. Forseth conducted several sessions for the Indian Health Service and tribal employees, this was to bring awareness to the ever increasing workplace violence.

Our department sponsored and assisted in teaching a defensive driving class for the Senior Citizens of Fort Belknap. One of our staff is a volunteer with the AARP Tribal Driver Safety Program, this class is open to all drivers.

A Spay and Neuter Clinic was held in July at Fort Belknap. 88 dogs and cats were brought in by their owners. We also coordinate and purchase supplies and vaccine for our Rabies Clinic which is held in all three communities. We consider the clinics an injury prevention tool because having these clinics cuts down on the number of dog bites in the area.

Ms. Viola Grant, an officer with the Fort Belknap Police Department

assisted with a bike rodeo in the three communities on the reservation. She covered bike safety and each child rode his/her bike through an obstacle course. All participants received a free bike helmet and information regarding bike safety and pedestrian safety.

We collaborated with the Fort Belknap Law Enforcement Department to conduct safety and sobriety checks at the Milk River and Hays Celebrations.

**August 15 – 17, 2006-** We sponsored a native youth leadership training at Ft. Belknap. Topics included Alcohol/drugs, Meth, Suicide Awareness, Violence, gangs in school, healthy relationships and peer pressure, teen pregnancy, values, self esteem, goal setting, culture and spirituality, and other topics deemed relevant. The training topics were combined to engage group activities. The major goal was to provide information so the youth could create their own public service announcements for their peers and community members utilizing the local radio station KGVA.

Fort Belknap, continued on page 3..

**National Health and  
Wellness  
Observance  
Calendar:**

**November 2006**

**American Diabetes Month**

<http://www.diabetes.org>

**Diabetic Eye Disease Month**

<http://www.preventblindness.org>

**Great American Smoke Out Month**

<http://www.cancer.org>

**National Home Care Month**

<http://www.nahc.org>

**American Education Week,  
November 12-18**

<http://www.nea.org>

**National Family Health  
History Day, November 23**

<http://www.hhs.gov/familyhistory/>

**Tie One On For Safety  
Campaign, November 23-  
January 1**

<http://www.madd.org>

**December 2006**

**National Drunk & Drugged  
Driving Prevention Month**

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>

**Safe Toys and Gifts Month**

<http://www.preventblindness.org>

**National Hand Washing  
Awareness Week**

<http://www.henrythehand.com>

**Area Wide News and Events, continued.**

Throughout the year our staff attend networking meetings with all other tribal programs and area schools, these activities are to provide safe and healthy alternatives to suicide, drug/alcohol use.

Our upcoming activities that we have scheduled in the future are to host Ms. Crystal Owen who is from the Sisseton Wahpeton Tribe in South Dakota. Crystal is a founder of the first Native MADD (Mothers against drunk driving) Program. She is going to be at Ft. Belknap the end of October or early November, she will conduct her presentation to the youth of Fort Belknap on drinking and driving.

The staff conducted a fire drill and fire safety education for the White Clay Immersion School. The students were shown how to use a fire extinguisher. **Submitted by Stan Zander, Jr., Ft. Belknap Injury Prevention.**

October, 2006- The Fort Belknap Meth Task Force held a meeting this past October.



**Members of the Fort Belknap Meth Task Force Meeting discuss ways to combat meth use on the Fort Belknap Reservation, October, 2006.**

**Fort Peck Service Unit**

**October, 2006**— A car seat clinic sponsored by the Fort Peck Community College was funded and facilitated by Indian County

Environmental Health Project students Adrian Spotted Bird, Dana Buckles, and Dennis Four Bear. **Submitted by Allyson Kelly, Rocky Mountain College.**

**October, 2006**— The Fort Peck Injury Prevention program and local Law Enforcement sponsored a Safety Check in Wolf Point, MT. The event stopped motor vehicles



**Adrian Spotted Bird and Dana Buckles installing car seats for young children.**



**A couple of young participants received new car seats at the Fort Peck Community College's Car Seat Clinic, October, 2006.**

check for license, registration, and passenger seat belt and child restraint use. Those children who did not have any or proper restraints were given a new car seat.

**Northern Cheyenne  
Service Unit**

**October, 2006**— Martha Burton worked with the Northern Cheyenne police department and pulled 1 year of records to determine where injuries were happening. This photo is taken of her at the Indian Country Environmental Health Project Northern Cheyenne workshop. The conference was offered to all

**Environmental Health**



professionals to talk about cancer, diabetes, and seat belt use. Over 50 people attended. **Submitted by Allyson Kelly, Rocky Mountain College.**

**Wind River Service Unit**

**Eastern Shoshone Tribe**

**November, 2006**—

Completed a Seat Belt and Child Restraint Observational Survey for the month of November 2006.

**Northern Arapaho Tribe**

**November, 2006**—

Did Not Submit Information.



## Holiday Safety

### Spotlight:

### “Tie One On for Safety Campaign.”

### MADD Project

-In 2003, 1,579 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve. (NHTSA, 2004)

-In 2003, during the Thanksgiving to New Year's holiday season, 2,120 people died in alcohol-related crashes and/or crashes in which safety belts were not used. (NHTSA, 2004) Tips:

1. Try not to consume alcohol during the holidays, if possible.
2. Be a responsible party host. Offer non-alcoholic beverages and provide alternate transportation or accommodations for guests who have been drinking.
3. Always designate a non-drinking driver if your outing involves alcohol.
4. Don't rely on coffee to sober up guests, only time can do the trick.
5. Increase awareness about drunk driving during the holiday season.
6. Offer suggestions to deter drunk driving.
7. Do not offer alcoholic beverages to underage minors.
8. Buckle Up every time you get in your vehicle.

## **RMC's IEHP Comes to an End, from pg. 1**

The Environmental Health Project consisted of three classes totaling 150 hours of instruction. Classes covered a broad range of environmental health topics unique to American Indians.

- Introduction to Environmental Health.
- Case Studies and Investigations- A survey of the Food Hygiene, Epidemiology, Risk Assessment, Toxicology, Hazardous/Solid Waste, Air Pollution, Disease Vectors, Injuries, Accidents, and Chronic Disease.
- Intervention and Prevention of Environmental Health Topics- Strategies for prevention and intervention that target environmental health threats among Montana's American Indian people.

Classes were offered via Vision Net to four tribal colleges- Fort Peck Community College, Fort Belknap College, Little Big Horn College, and Chief Dull Knife College. Faculty rotated among each reservation each week for one year. Twenty-eight students completed the 1-year certificate program. Twelve students completed one or more classes within the program.

Project objectives included: developing a sustainable network of American Indian environmental health professionals while providing support for the sharing of practices, programs and data. Additionally the ICEHP developed and implemented tribal community interventions. Examples of such projects and interventions are highlighted below:

- Researched and communicated the sources of mercury in Indian Country- developed brochure and community outreach that has been recognized nationally.
- Determined that elevated levels of H-pylori and E-coli exist in tribal waters- educated community and schools about contaminants and pollutant pathways.
- Hosted environmental health workshops to bring tribal, state, and local agencies together- identifying the real threats to human life and health of Indian people.
- Purchased 20 car seats for infants and children at Fort Peck, jointly worked with law enforcement and tribal health offices to perform safety checks, distributing car seats and educating community about installation.
- Hosted the first environmental justice workshop in conjunction with the State of Montana DPHHS- state wide outreach and sharing.
- Created working group and anti- meth campaign at Fort Belknap- uniting tribal, local, and K-12 schools.
- Emergency preparedness and environmental health education / outreach at Wyola schools, K-8<sup>th</sup> grades.
- Initiated water quality sampling and analysis in conjunction with partner tribal colleges. Determined that private septic tanks may be source of contamination, routine maintenance should be promoted to protect families from exposure to bacteria.

As we look to the future, the sun is shining over Montana's Indian Country. I cannot help but think it is because of the tremendous support and partnership from the Indian Health Service, Center's for Disease Control and Prevention, Tribal Leaders Council, and many state, federal, tribal organizations.

Looking ahead:

October 2006 RMC American Indian Affairs secured \$300,000 in funding for an Environmental Protection Agency grant to reduce toxics in Indian Country. This project builds on the ICEHP model and participating reservations/partners.

November 2006 RMC American Indian Affairs secured \$328,000 in funding to develop and offer a bachelor of science in applied environmental science to four tribal colleges, Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Chief Dull Knife, and Little Big Horn. Twenty students will graduate in October 2008 with a Bachelor of Science degree.

December 2006 RMC American Indian Affairs and the Physician Assistant Program will host the first planning meeting to make RMC a Center for Rural Health Excellence, with the creation of a telehealth center at RMC.

One must remember that at the very core of every tribal community is a person. This person has the power to recreate Indian Country. As professionals and partners, we must empower Indian Country Montana. Improved health and environments will be a visible transformation for the world to see.

Article submitted by Allyson Kelly, Rocky Mountain College.

# Holiday Safety Spotlight

Article by Safe Kids USA.

## Decorating Your Home for the Holidays

**The holiday season is a time for celebration. However, each year, fires injure 2,600 people in the United States and cause more than \$930 million in damage.**

**As people decorate their homes with trees, wreaths, electric lights and candles, there are important steps to remember to ensure a safe and happy holiday.**

## Christmas Trees

If you are going to decorate a natural tree in your home, there are several things to note:

- When you select your tree, the needles should be fresh, green and hard to pull off a branch. If needles fall off easily, the tree is drying out and can be a fire hazard.
- Carefully select an appropriate spot in your home for the tree. Do not put the tree near any source of heat, such as a fireplace or heat vent. This can cause the tree to dry more quickly and create a fire hazard.
- Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.
- Use a large, sturdy tree stand, so children can't pull the tree down.
- Cut the branches on the bottom of the tree, so they don't poke children in the eye.
- Check electric lights for frayed wires, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive wear before use.
- Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.
- Do not leave electric lights unattended.
- Do not overload electrical outlets.

## Gift and Home Decorations

- All decorations should be nonflammable or flame-retardant. They should not be placed near heating vents or fireplaces.
- Do not put wrapping paper in the fireplace, as chemicals can build up in the home and cause an explosion.
- Artificial Christmas trees should be flame-retardant.
- Broken ornaments can be a hazard for children. Keep sharp or breakable glass ornaments out of their reach.
- Keep ribbon away from small children. A child can be strangled by a 7-inch piece of ribbon or string.

## Candles

- Do not leave candles unattended.
- Use stable candle holders that are out of reach of children.
- Do not put lit candles on a tree.

## Cooking and Kitchen Safety Tips for the Holidays

**One cup of sugar, two tablespoons butter, combined with one cup of supervision, and a pinch of patience can be the right mix during these hectic times.**

**As holiday goodies are being prepared, children are eager to lend a hand. Whether decorating cookies or mixing salad dressing, children need close adult supervision at all times in and around the kitchen.**

## Age-Appropriate Tasks for Children

Since each child is different, it is important for parents and caregivers to consider the developmental level and abilities of their children when it comes to assigning kitchen duties.

Generally, children under age 10 don't fully understand what danger means and therefore should not handle the stove, electrical appliances, sharp utensils or hot dishes. Younger children can begin helping in the kitchen with basics like washing vegetables and fruits, or other tasks that don't require knives, appliances or heat.

Here are a few suggested activities and very general age guidelines that Safe Kids Worldwide and the National Fire Protection Association recommend.

### Children ages 3-5 can:

- Get ingredients out of the refrigerator and cupboards.
- Stir ingredients together in a bowl.
- Pour liquids into a bowl.
- Rinse foods under cold water.
- Use a cookie cutter to cut out shapes in dough.

### Children ages 6-8 can:

- Use a butter knife to spread frosting, peanut butter or soft cheese.
- Peel vegetables.
- Measure ingredients.
- Stir ingredients in a bowl.
- Set the table.

### Children ages 9-12 can:

- Use electrical kitchen appliances such as blenders, food processors, electric mixers and microwaves.
- Help plan the meals.
- Open cans.
- Squeeze garlic from a garlic press and use a grater to shred cheese and vegetables.
- Turn stove burners on and off and select oven temperature when an adult is supervising.

### Children ages 13 and up can:

- Operate the stovetop without adult supervision.
- Drain cooked pasta into a colander.
- Remove a tray of cookies from the oven.
- Heat food in the microwave without adult supervision.

## General Cooking and Kitchen Safety Tips

Never leave a hot stove unattended. *(Unattended food on the stove is the number one cause of home fires.)*



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**Billings Area Indian  
Health Service**

## Mission of the Indian Health Service

**THE MISSION OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE IS TO RAISE THE PHYSICAL, MENTAL, SOCIAL, AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH OF AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKAN NATIVES TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL.**

**THE GOAL TO ASSURE THAT COMPREHENSIVE, CULTURALLY ACCEPTABLE PERSONAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TO AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE.**

**OUR FOUNDATION. TO UPHOLD THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S OBLIGATION TO PROMOTE HEALTH FOR AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES, AND CULTURES AND TO HONOR AND PROTECT THE INHERENT SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OF TRIBES.**

## Injury Prevention Program

### **OUR MISSION:**

**TO RAISE THE HEALTH STATUS OF AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKAN NATIVES TO THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL BY DECREASING THE INCIDENCE OF SEVERE INJURIES AND DEATH TO THE LOWEST POSSIBLE LEVEL AND INCREASING THE ABILITY OF TRIBES TO ADDRESS THEIR INJURY PROBLEMS.**



Billings Area Injury Prevention Monthly  
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